

What is Claimed is:

1. A method for providing a breathable gas to a patient, the method comprising the steps of:
providing a face mask having a first aperture and a second aperture, the first aperture
5 having a controllably variable inside diameter, wherein the second aperture is in fluid
communication with the breathable gas;

placing the mask over the face of the patient;

supplying the breathable gas to the patient through the second aperture;

inserting a first shaft member through the first aperture;

forming a seal between the first aperture and the inserted first shaft member; and

advancing the first shaft member into either of the oral or nasal orifice of the patient

while supplying the breathable gas to the patient.

2. A method for providing a breathable gas as in Claim 1, wherein the first aperture has an
inner wall defining the controllably variable inside diameter.

3. A method for providing a breathable gas as in Claim 1, wherein the first aperture closing
step includes forming an air-tight seal about the inserted first shaft member.

20 4. A method for providing a breathable gas as in Claim 1, wherein the breathable gas
supplying step includes supplying the breathable gas at a positive pressure within the mask to
the patient.

5. A method for providing a breathable gas as in Claim 4, wherein the breathable gas supplying step includes supplying the breathable gas which is enriched in oxygen relative to air.

6. A method for providing a breathable gas as in Claim 4, wherein the breathable gas supplying step includes supplying an anesthetic agent in the breathable gas.

7. A method for providing a breathable gas as in Claim 1, wherein the first shaft member is a laryngoscope and the method further includes identifying the trachea using the laryngoscope.

8. A method for providing a breathable gas as in Claim 7, further comprising:
providing a second shaft member having a lumen therethrough; and
advancing the second shaft over the first shaft, through the first aperture and into the patient.

9. A method for providing a breathable gas as in Claim 8, wherein the second shaft is an endotracheal tube, and the method further comprises:
supplying the breathable gas through the endotracheal tube; and
removing the mask from the face over the endotracheal tube.

10. A method for providing a breathable gas as in Claim 9, wherein the endotracheal tube has a proximal end, and the removing step includes disconnecting the endotracheal tube from the breathable gas and passing the mask first aperture over the endotracheal tube proximal end.

11. A method for providing a breathable gas as in Claim 8, wherein the first and second shaft members are advanced together through the first aperture.

12. A method for providing a breathable gas as in Claim 7, wherein the inserting first shaft member step is preceded by a step including adjusting the first aperture inside diameter so as to be able large enough to receive the first shaft member therethrough, and the second shaft advancing step is preceded by adjusting the first aperture inside diameter so as to be large enough to receive the second shaft therethrough.

13. A method for providing a breathable gas as in Claim 1, wherein the mask has an apex and the first aperture is closer to the apex than the second aperture.

14. A method for providing a breathable gas as in Claim 1, wherein the supplying breathable gas step includes maintaining the breathable gas between the mask and face at a positive pressure, wherein the breathable gas includes an anesthetic agent, further comprising performing a medical procedure using the first shaft, wherein the medical procedure is selected from the group consisting of diagnostic and therapeutic medical procedures.

15. A method for providing a breathable gas as in Claim 14, wherein the medical procedures are selected from the group consisting of examination and treatment of lesions of the nose, sinuses, mouth, larynx, pharynx, trachea, bronchi, esophagus and stomach.

16. A method for providing a breathable gas as in Claim 14, wherein the first shaft is inserted into body conduits selected from the group consisting of the nasal cavities, the oral cavities, the trachea, and the esophagus.

5 17. A method for providing a breathable gas as in Claim 1, wherein the supplying breathable gas step includes supplying an anesthetic agent.

18. A method for providing a breathable gas as in Claim 1, wherein the supplying breathable gas step includes supplying an anesthetic agent through the second aperture while the first aperture is sealed against airflow, further comprising adjusting the first aperture inside diameter to accommodate passage of an endotracheal tube and advancing the endotracheal tube through the first aperture.

19. A face mask for placement on the face of a patient, the face mask comprising:
a mask wall having a generally concave interior shape, the mask wall having a first aperture therethrough and a second aperture therethrough, wherein the first aperture has an adjustable inside diameter.

20 20. A face mask as in Claim 19, wherein the first aperture is disposed within a raised lip having an inner wall, wherein the adjustable inside diameter aspect includes an inwardly movable wall.

21. A face mask as in Claim 19, wherein the wall is part of an inflatable envelope disposed within the first aperture.

22. A face mask as in Claim 19, wherein the first aperture has a wall defining the aperture,
5 wherein the wall has an inflatable envelope disposed within, such that inflating the envelope decreases the inside diameter of the first aperture.

23. A face mask as in Claim 19, wherein the first aperture has an inner wall defined by a plurality of members, wherein the members have an open position and a closed position, wherein the members are movable between the open and the closed position for decreasing the first aperture inside diameter.

24. A face mask as in Claim 23, wherein the plurality of members are inflatable balloon members, such that inflating the members decreases the inside diameter.

25. A face mask as in Claim 23, wherein the plurality of members are iris members which cooperate to decrease the first aperture inside diameter.

26. A face mask as in Claim 19, wherein the face mask wall has an apex, wherein the first
20 aperture is disposed closer to the apex than the second aperture.

27. A face mask as in Claim 19, wherein the mask has an apex, wherein the first aperture is disposed within the apex.

28. A face mask as in Claim 19, wherein the first aperture has a maximum inside diameter, wherein the maximum inside diameter is at least about 3/8 inch.

5 29. A face mask as in Claim 19, wherein the first aperture has a maximum inside diameter, wherein the maximum inside diameter is at least about 5/8 inch.

30. A face mask as in Claim 19, wherein the first aperture had a maximum inside diameter, wherein the maximum inside diameter is at least about 1 inch.

31. A face mask for providing positive pressure ventilation to a patient, a face mask comprising:

a face mask wall for extending over the mouth and nose of the patient;

the face mask wall having a first aperture therethrough and a second aperture therethrough, wherein the first aperture has a seal therein for providing a controllably variable inside diameter to the first aperture.

32. A face mask as in Claim 31, wherein the seal includes at least one inflatable balloon, such that inflating the at least one balloon decreases the inside diameter of the first aperture.

33. A face mask as in Claim 31, wherein the first aperture seal includes an adjustable iris.